

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 3 and the on-going Republican war against women's health care in America. H.R. 3 continues the Tea Party Republican's extreme social agenda to pursue unprecedented attacks on women's health and economic security.

The Republican majority passed H.R. 1 and slashed billions of dollars from programs that allow women to provide and care for their families such as Head Start, Women, infants and children (WIC), Community Service Block Grants (CSBG), and the Maternal and Child Block Grant. Clearly their efforts targeted vulnerable women and their children – people who do not have high paid, high powered lobbyists, as the victims of budget cuts.

Their bill H.R. 2 repealed the *Affordable Care Act*, which ensures women have greater access to affordable health coverage and recommended preventative care. The Republican repeal of the *Affordable Care Act* would strip 32 million Americans of health insurance coverage, again making families vulnerable.

Now, H.R. 3 seeks to place unprecedented restrictions on a woman's ability to receive and pay for a legal medical procedure. This Republican bill places the federal government directly between a woman and her doctor.

H.R. 3 is not about 'codifying the Hyde Amendment' as my colleagues have stated. Federal law already prohibits even a single federal dollar from being used to pay for abortion services, except in the cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother. Instead, this legislation furthers a radical agenda that seeks to limit a woman's right to access comprehensive reproductive medical care.

Exploiting the federal tax code for ideological purposes, this bill enacts new restrictions on a woman's ability to pay for legal medical services with private insurance, a health savings account, or private funds. A responsible small business owner that includes comprehensive reproductive care in their company's insurance policy will be denied their federal health care tax credit. A survivor of rape or incest may have to prove to an IRS agent with a detailed account of her brutalization in order to use her health savings account to pay for the procedure or qualify for an itemized medical deduction on her taxes.

These restrictions allow politicians and IRS bureaucrats to influence medical decisions that should be made by a woman, her physician, family, and often with support and guidance from a spiritual leader. I strongly oppose any effort in Congress that creates government interference with private decisions that should be made between a doctor and a patient. I strongly oppose this war on women in America that threatens our freedoms and our rights.

Instead of focusing on this divisive agenda, we should be focusing on policies that will improve the lives of America's women and girls such as addressing the quality of women's health care, fighting gender discrimination, increasing economic opportunities, and providing them with the education and support to succeed.

I encourage my colleagues to oppose this bill and fight to keep safe, comprehensive reproductive and family planning services accessible to all Americans.